(b) if so, when the survey was conducted and whether the survey has indicated the feasibility of the proposed project;

(c) the estimated cost for upgrading the above airstrip;

(d) whether Karnataka Government has agreed to bear the cost; and

(e) the present status of the above project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has no plan at present for development of Yermarus airstrip at Raichur due to non-receipt of any demand from any scheduled airline to commence operations.

Adherence to CVC Guidelines on Purchase of Aircrafts

1401. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the public sector airline companies in India are likely to place orders for over 200 aircrafts with the world's two major aircraft manufacturers—Airbus and Boeing Co.worth $10 billion in 2005; and

(b) whether all these proposed purchases meet the CVC guidelines in full?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) (a) Indian Airlines proposal for acquisition of 43 aircrafts Manufactured by Airbus Industrie with engines from CFM International was approved by the PIB on 10.11.2004. Pursuant to the PIB approval, final negotiations with the lowest bidder have been initiated. An inter-disciplinary team of IAL is undertaking the negotiations under the overall supervision of an Oversight Committee.

A project Report for the induction of 18 B737-800W aircraft for Air India Express, a subsidiary of Air India has been submitted to the Government for approval. Air India has invited bids for 50 aircrafts.Technical and financial bids have been received from M/s. Airbus Industrie and M/s. Boeing for the aircraft and from Rolls Royce, General Electric and Pratt & Whitney for the engines. Techno Economic-cum-Negotiating Committee has

evaluated the Technical Bids and submitted its evaluation report to the Management in February 2005.

(b) Applicable procedures and guidelines in this regard have been followed.

Concession Agreement for a green field Airport near Hyderabad

1402. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Government of Malaysia have signed a concession agreement for a greenfiled airport near Hyderabad;

(b) what is the minimum standard of performance specified for the proposed international airport near Hyderabad;

(c) whether any time-frame has been fixed within which this airport is going to be completed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) (a) A Concession Agreement between Government of India and Hyderabad International Airport Limited (HIAL) was signed on 20th December, 2004.

(b) The airport has to achieve a minimum IATA rating of 3.5 out of 5 (in the IATA scale of 1 to 5) as per the IATA Global Airport Monitor Service Standards.

(c) and (d) A time-frame of 36 months from the date of Financial Closure has been fixed for completion of the airport.

Virgin Atlantic's direct Air Services in India

1403. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have allowed Virgin Atlantic (VA) to operate in India directly an cancelled its earlier arrangement; and

(b) if so, the details about the loss to Air India therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) (a) and (b) The commercial agreement between Air India and Virgin Atlantic, under which Virgin Atlantic was earlier operating thrice weekly flights to India utilising our entitlements, had been terminated